leading astray, since Leaders are made in the likeness of the led.

Thus it was not chance or his own ambition merely which carried Ramsay MacDonald to the Premiership. He had his part to play, and that was the role in which he had been cast. Grounded in resentment against his obscure birth and childhood poverty, nurtured in the Fabian Society, the I.L.P., and other offshoots of the late-Victorian urge to improve the conditions of the poor without seriously incommoding the rich, brought to fruition in four and a half years of bloody warfare followed by a fraudulent peace and hysterical reaction against the strain and agony of war, his moment surely came. *He* had not succumbed to the fever of war,[2] nor to the fever of peace. Conscientious objections which once made him despised among men now added to his prestige. 'MacDonaldstein', Horatio Bottomley had often called him during the War years, and angrily asked on a *John Bull* poster: 'When Will They Put MacDonald In Gaol?' Horatio it was who went to gaol, while MacDonald —possibilities were opening up before him beyond the dreams of the sometime editor *of John Bull* and Soldier's Friend.

At the beginning of 1930, MacDonald had been Premier for six months. His first premiership, so troubled, ending so ignominiously, was already almost forgotten. This time he felt easier, surer of himself. He had become less distracted-looking than he used to be, smoother and more respectable, often in evening dress, playful with his opponents rather than angry.

[2] MacDonald's pacifism is, like everything else in his life,

confused. That he made himself greatly unpopular during the War, is certain; but what were his actual opinions about it, and what policy, if any, he advocated, are still the subject of controversy. It would be difficult to deduce from, for instance, his speech in the House of Commons in August 1914, and his letter to the Mayor of Leicester, declining an invitation to address a recruiting meeting, any coherent attitude of mind. Lord Elton, in his *The Life of James Ramsay MacDonald,* attempts to disentangle his various pronouncements about the War, but even he admits that they were 'sometimes subtle and occasionally obscure', and that they involved him *i& some queer political alliances and entanglements, which themselves sometimes coloured his views, or, more often, distorted them for the public.'